UNITED NATIONS

DP

Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and of the United Nations Population Fund

Distr.
GENERAL

DP/1995/40
25 July 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Third regular session 1995
11-15 September 1995, New York
Item 9 of the provisional agenda
UNFPA

UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND

UNFPA TECHNICAL SUPPORT SERVICES ARRANGEMENTS

Report of the Executive Director

CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION 2

II. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TSS ARRANGEMENTS 3

III. OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE TSS ARRANGEMENTS 5

IV. PROPOSALS FOR STRENGTHENING THE TSS ARRANGEMENTS 14

V. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF PROPOSED ARRANGEMENTS 19

VI. CONCLUSION 20

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS 21

ANNEX (containing tables 1 and 2) 22

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. This report, prepared in response to Governing Council decision 93/27, paragraph 11, and as noted in paragraph 14 of Governing Council decision 91/37, analyses the effectiveness of the successor support-cost arrangements, currently known as the Technical Support Services (TSS) arrangements, and discusses the proposed improvements in their operation and structure in the next four years. It builds on the results of an independent evaluation of the TSS arrangements conducted in 1994 in accordance with paragraph 14 of Governing Council decision 91/37 and on the experience gained during their implementation. It also reflects UNFPA's new programme priorities in the light of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) (document DP/1995/25 and Corr.1) as endorsed by the Executive Board in June 1995 in decision 95/15.

2. The Fund's TSS arrangements were established in 1992 to replace the previous arrangements of providing technical assistance through regional advisers based in United Nations agency regional offices. Its basic objectives are to provide effective and timely support for population programmes and policies in developing countries, to enhance and maximize the use of national and regional capacities in population activities, to use the most appropriate and competitive sources of technical assistance, to bring technical advice closer to field-level activities, to help Governments assume the management of UNFPA-funded programmes and projects, and to continue the practice of cost-sharing between UNFPA and the agencies of the United Nations system participating in the new successor arrangements (Governing Council decision 91/37, para. 1).

3. This report acknowledges that the system has worked well and proposes improvements that are tailored to UNFPA's specific programme requirements as recognized in Governing Council decision 90/26, paragraph 2. The changes, emphasizing a multi sectoral approach, are proposed in the context of the ICPD Programme of Action, which set up a new paradigm of population and development. The Programme of Action places the well-being of women and men at the centre of sustainable development, rather than focusing on demographic concerns and targets. In light of the ICPD, UNFPA will concentrate its assistance in three core areas: (a) reproductive health, including family planning and sexual health (hereinafter referred to as reproductive health); (b) population and development strategies; and (c) advocacy. This will sharpen the strategic focus of the Fund's programming priorities and strengthen its efforts to pursue a holistic approach in addressing the population needs of the countries to which it provides assistance. In its efforts to further decentralize approval authority to the field, the Fund has also simplified its programming procedures and adopted a series of measures to strengthen its field offices.

4. This report contains information on the implementation of the Fund's TSS arrangements, in particular the distribution of advisers and agency specialists; an assessment of the overall effectiveness of the TSS arrangements; proposals for strengthening the arrangements; and the financial implications of the proposed arrangements.

II. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TSS ARRANGEMENTS

A. Distribution of TSS posts by region and by field of competence

5. The current TSS arrangements include a total of 164 expert posts distributed as follows: 122 advisers in eight Country Support Teams (CSTs); 33 TSS specialists at the agency headquarters of the United Nations (in the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis (DESIPA)), the ILO, FAO, UNESCO and WHO; and 9 coordinators -- 1 each at the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), 6 at WHO regional offices and 1 at United Nations headquarters. As of May 1995, there were 137 incumbents/candidates under recruitment: 106 CST advisers and 31 specialists/coordinators. Of these 137 advisers/specialists, 70 per cent are men and 30 per cent women. Twenty-four per cent of the incumbents are from the Africa region; 12 per cent are from the Arab States; 26 per cent are from the Asia and Pacific region; 12 per cent are from Latin America and the Caribbean; 14 per cent are from Europe; and 12 per cent from North America.

6. In Africa, the three CSTs are located in Dakar, Senegal; Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; and Harare, Zimbabwe. The CST in Dakar, which covers 17 countries in west and central Africa, was established during July-September 1992. The CST in Addis Ababa, which covers 13 countries in east and central Africa, became operational during the same period. The CST in Harare, which covers 15 countries in southern Africa, became operational in January 1993.

7. The CST for the Arab States and Europe, based in Amman, Jordan, started operations in October 1992 and covers 19 countries in the Arab region and 17 countries in eastern Europe.

8. In Asia and the Pacific, two teams started operations during July-September 1992. The CST in Bangkok, Thailand, covers 14 countries in east and south-east Asia. The CST in Kathmandu, Nepal, covers 15 countries in south and west Asia. The CST in Suva, Fiji, became operational in April 1993 and covers 15 countries in the Pacific.

9. The CST for Latin America and the Caribbean, which is based in Santiago, Chile, became operational in July 1992 and covers 23 countries in Latin America as well as 19 English-speaking Caribbean islands. Of the total of 14 posts, 12 are located in Santiago and two in Trinidad and Tobago. The latter provide assistance tailored to the needs of the English-speaking Caribbean countries in response to the Caribbean Community's request in mid-1993.

10. The distribution of the CST adviser posts by field of competence is as follows: 34 posts in reproductive health; 7 posts in gender, population and development; 16 posts in population and development strategies; 19 posts in population statistics, analysis, information systems and databases; 36 posts in information, education and communication (IEC); 2 posts in other fields; and 8 CST directors.

11. The 42 specialist and coordinator posts are distributed as follows: 6 posts at FAO, 6 posts at the ILO, 5 posts at UNESCO, 5 posts at WHO-Geneva and 6 posts in WHO regional offices, 12 posts at United Nations headquarters, and 2 posts at the United Nations regional commissions. These specialists represent the following areas of competence: 11 posts in reproductive health; 2 posts in gender, population and development; 9 posts in population and development strategies; 9 posts in population statistics, analysis, information systems and databases; 7 posts in IEC; and 4 posts in other areas.

B. The Inter-Agency Task Force

12. An Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) composed of all participating agencies and chaired by the UNFPA Deputy Executive Director for Programme monitors the implementation of the TSS arrangements. The IATF, which meets on an annual basis or as needed and has met several times prior to and after the establishment of the TSS arrangements, has ensured close coordination with all participating agencies in the work of the TSS arrangements. The TSS guidelines, which have been improved following the experience of the first two years of implementation, establish clear lines of accountability, management structures, reporting and working relationships, as urged by the Governing Council in decision 92/32.

C. Cost

13. Governing Council decision 91/37, paragraph 10, authorized the Executive Director "to commit an amount of $130.3 million over the four-year period 1992-1995, not exceeding 13.8 per cent of programmable resources, and to allocate these funds for technical support services and for administrative and operational services, based on a compensation arrangement with executing agencies of 7.5 per cent of project expenditures incurred for the implementation of country projects, with the exception of the United Nations in 1992, for which the current level of 13 per cent applies".

14. The TSS expenditures were $14.5 million for 1992; $17.4 million for 1993; and $19.5 million for 1994. For 1995 the expenditures are estimated at about $23 million (against allocations of $26.1 million). The administrative and operational services (AOS) expenditures were $8.3 million for 1992; $6.6 million for 1993; and $8.3 million for 1994. They are estimated at $9.3 million for 1995. Total expenditures for both TSS and AOS for the four-year period, 1992-1995, are thus estimated at $106.9 million.

III. OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE TSS ARRANGEMENTS

15. At its fortieth session in 1993, the Governing Council reviewed the "Progress report on UNFPA successor support cost arrangements" (document DP/1993/32). That document provided an update on the implementation of the TSS arrangements and covered achievements and constraints that had been experienced.

16. As requested in decision 91/37 of the Governing Council, an evaluation of the TSS arrangements was conducted by a team of independent consultants during the period April to October 1994. The objective of the evaluation was to assess the experience with the implementation of the arrangements so as to enable the Fund to take appropriate steps to further strengthen their effectiveness.

17. The evaluators focused on: (a) analysing how the three levels of technical assistance have been put into effect in order to provide coordinated, effective and timely support for population programmes and policies in selected countries; (b) assessing the effectiveness of mechanisms and procedures; and (c) analysing the coordination and management aspects of technical advisory services of the TSS arrangements.

18. The evaluators visited 28 countries before visiting the concerned CSTs to discuss in-country findings. In each of the countries visited, the evaluation team held discussions with the Government and, in some countries, with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as well. Upon completion of their missions to the various CSTs, the evaluators visited participating agency headquarters including concerned regional offices and the United Nations regional commissions. These visits included interviews with TSS specialists and coordinators and with other senior United Nations agency staff.

19. The draft of the evaluation report was distributed to all IATF members for their review and comments prior to, during and after an IATF meeting in December 1994. A subsequent discussion with IATF members focusing on the composition and structure of the TSS arrangements took place from 16 to 18 May 1995.

A. Institutional context

20. In UNFPA's assessment of the TSS arrangements, the Fund has found that the past and current structural changes within its partner agencies, as noted below, demonstrate their commitment to the population dimension within their own mandates. The ongoing consolidation of each agency's team of TSS specialists into one unit also has great potential to further a holistic approach to population issues within the respective agency's mandate.

UNFPA

21. The TSS arrangements assume greater significance and relevance given the major responsibility of UNFPA in monitoring the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action at country, regional and global levels. UNFPA is committed to assist countries in re-orienting national programmes and strategies in accordance with the ICPD goals and affirms the importance of providing quality reproductive health and family planning services; implementing population policies as an integral part of sustainable development; and undertaking advocacy for population and development concerns, particularly for the empowerment of women. Since the ICPD, UNFPA has examined the policy and programme implications of the Programme of Action for UNFPA, in particular as they relate to the policy orientations, programme focus and operational strategies of the Fund. In its report on programme priorities (DP/1995/25), UNFPA has stated that it will concentrate its funding in three core areas: (a) reproductive health, including family planning and sexual health, (b) population and development strategies and (c) advocacy. The Fund is also in the process of further decentralizing approval authority and is currently reviewing its programming procedures to allow maximum flexibility to its Country Directors in the management and implementation of country programmes while strengthening technical and financial accountability, including the establishment of programme performance review.

FAO

22. As a result of the restructuring of FAO, population is now recognized and visible in the organizational structure. The population factor is widely recognized as a crucial component of sustainable development. With the restructuring of FAO, a Population Programme Service (PPS) has been created and located within the Division of Women in Development and People's Participation. For the first time, population is recognized as an organizational and technical unit within FAO. The PPS has its own identifiable sub-programme within the Proposed Programme of Work and Budget 1996-1997. The TSS specialists are being regrouped within the PPS in order to contribute a critical mass within the organization in the area of population and enhance cross-fertilization among the areas of expertise represented.

ILO

23. The ILO's Labour and Population Programme forms part of its Development Policies Programme, which has been given the responsibility for the agency's follow-up to the ICPD and the implementation of the Programme of Action. All TSS specialists are located in the Development Policies Branch, which enables them to integrate population concerns into major ILO programmes. New initiatives proposed in this area are: (a) to design and implement social development policies and programmes that deal with population problems; (b) to provide technical assistance to enhance national capacity to handle population and development issues; and (c) to

educate workers at the grass-roots level concerning family and community welfare, including gender issues. The ILO's newly established multi disciplinary teams (MDTs), which have the primary role of providing policy advice and guidance on technical issues at the field level, can provide further support to the work of TSS specialists at the ILO headquarters.

UNESCO

24. The new "Medium-Term Strategy, 1996-2001" of UNESCO recognizes the need for a coordinated approach to deal with population, environment and development. UNESCO's main areas of work will be: (a) to conduct research and development activities and to promote networking to assist in the preparation of relevant educational materials and the training of personnel; (b) to improve national capacity to reorient education and training activities; and (c) to mobilize decision makers, opinion leaders and media professionals to increase awareness of population, environment and development. UNESCO's Population Education and Information for Development Project (EPD) is the main tool in implementing the above tasks. The TSS specialists have been placed under one unified structure in the EPD. This will enhance interdisciplinary cooperation and facilitate the provision of coordinated backstopping of CSTs by the TSS specialists.

WHO

25. Following the approval in May 1995 of the WHO's Strategy for Reproductive Health as a follow-up to the ICPD, the organization foresees strengthening activities and approaches to providing integrated and improved reproductive health services, giving special attention to gender equity and to the empowerment of women. The TSS specialists are an integral part of the Family Planning and Population Unit of WHO's Division of Family Health. The Unit's functions are to: (a) provide support services to regional and country teams to help strengthen national maternal and child health/family planning policies and programmes; (b) develop technical and managerial guidelines on such issues as contraceptive technologies, quality of care, IEC, advocacy, and evaluation; (c) maintain global and country-specific databases to monitor reproductive health trends and patterns; (d) develop new approaches and materials for training and integrating population and family planning issues into the training curricula of health workers; (e) collaborate with international organizations and agencies, professional groups, women's groups and other NGOs to improve access to and quality of family planning information and services; and (f) develop mechanisms to strengthen linkages with other WHO programmes in family planning and related issues.

United Nations headquarters

26. Since 1992, considerable restructuring of programmes has been undertaken within the United Nations. Both the Population Division and the Statistical Division are located within the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis (DESIPA), which serves as the principal tool of the Secretary General for the compilation, improvement and dissemination of economic and social data and the monitoring and analysis of national and regional development and population policies, trends and their interactions. The Statistical Division provides a broad range of services to users and producers of statistics worldwide, including demographic statistics. The Population Division produces studies on a broad range of population factors, including population trends and projections, and also examines relationships among population change, resources, the environment and socio-economic development.

B. Achievements of the TSS arrangements

27. According to the evaluation report, the TSS arrangements are "a major improvement over the old system of regional advisers as the arrangements provide for more effective and timely backstopping of UNFPA projects". During the short period of the implementation of the Fund's TSS arrangements, the TSS concept has been welcomed by all concerned, especially by the recipient Governments. The primary achievement of the TSS arrangements has been to improve the availability of technical knowledge at the country level. In replacing the previous system of regional advisers, the CSTs provide countries with a multi-disciplinary team of advisers who are available to respond to the technical backstopping needs of national population programmes with the aim of building national self-reliance in the field of population as stressed by the General Assembly in resolution 47/199. The CSTs have proven to be a most effective technical support arm of the UNFPA field offices, helping in the move towards national execution in developing countries throughout the world as well as aiding the trend towards greater decentralization of decision-making within UNFPA.

28. The CSTs have been able to meet the demands of countries for timely and effective technical knowledge through a team work plan based on national technical backstopping plans (TBPs). These TBPs, which are prepared by the UNFPA field office in consultation with government counterparts and agency representatives, specify national technical backstopping requirements and how these are to be met. In order to assist the UNFPA field offices in the preparation of TBPs, the CSTs have organized meetings with Country Directors and other concerned staff in their respective regions. This has contributed to a more precise definition of technical backstopping needs, resulting in marked improvements in the quality of TBPs and, as a consequence, in the timeliness of CST responses to requests for technical assistance.

29. The CSTs have been successful in contributing to an integrated and multidisciplinary approach to population in two ways: through multidisciplinary approaches within the CST office

and through multidisciplinary field missions. A strong team spirit, as seen in the rapid integration of various advisers representing different sectors and their ability to provide coordinated assistance, was achieved almost as soon as the CSTs were set up. As the evaluation report states, "One of the successes of the CST is the institution of regular team meetings, when an entire team can learn the results of missions to countries and provide a collective review of the documents produced by individual advisers". Team meetings have facilitated the process of cross-fertilization and have contributed to the building of collective expertise that has proved to be crucial in applying a holistic, integrated approach to technical assistance.

30. The CSTs have also engaged in multidisciplinary field missions in, among other countries, Bolivia, Indonesia, Mozambique, Peru and Viet Nam, where two or more advisers have undertaken joint missions to countries and where technical backstopping requirements in various sectors have been treated in a comprehensive manner. To date, most of these have occurred at the project rather than at the programme level, mainly because of difficulties of timing and logistics. However, CSTs are expected to be more involved in Programme Review and Strategy Development (PRSD) missions as well as mid-term country programme reviews as the programme cycles in each country advance and as the functions of the CSTs in relation to the whole programming process are refined.

31. The evaluation report also found several examples of successful technical support to country programmes by TSS specialists, and it noted the positive views of the arrangements as indicated by the agencies. However, UNFPA agrees with the evaluation that the flow of information and interaction between the participants of the TSS arrangements should be further improved, building on successful past activities, such as the provision of state-of-the-art information and technical backstopping to CSTs and to the country level from TSS agency headquarters. An instance of useful interaction includes one country mission to Viet Nam in August 1994 by an ILO specialist on development and on the use of training materials in population and development strategies, along with the concerned CST adviser. The specialist served as a resource person at a workshop on the use of demographic and socio-economic data in labour-force, education and employment planning. His participation at the meeting contributed to the knowledge and understanding of issues related to population and labour. Another example is the feedback provided by WHO to the CST in Suva on mission reports and the state-of-the-art materials in the area of reproductive health. Some of the publications received have been used by the CST advisers in their technical information/backstopping services. The CST for the Arab States and Europe has also benefited from various TSS agency missions from, among others, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, FAO and UNESCO, each of which discussed how to further strengthen the collaboration between their organization and the team. Moreover, at the IATF meeting held in May 1995, the Director of the CST for East and Central Africa noted the close collaboration in the Central African Republic between the CST and FAO which arose when FAO requested the support of the CST adviser in database management. The adviser successfully assisted the FAO-sponsored household nutrition survey with support in data processing.

32. The technical meetings and workshops held at the various TSS agency headquarters have proven valuable in stimulating further interaction between and among TSS specialists and CST advisers. At a meeting in October 1994 held at UNESCO headquarters, a number of IEC-related themes were discussed, including research technologies, gender concerns, education for girls, and how to improve the quality of population education. WHO, in collaboration with UNFPA, conducted a workshop on reproductive health in October 1994 that resulted in a number of recommendations to be considered by the CST advisers when providing their technical assistance. A third workshop was held at the same time at ILO headquarters on population and development strategies. In May 1995, UNFPA together with DESIPA arranged a workshop on data collection and analysis that brought together CST advisers and TSS specialists at United Nations headquarters to discuss the latest developments in this area.

C. Areas that need strengthening

33. The TSS arrangements are still new and evolving. As such, adjustments need to be made in order to meet the objectives fully.

34. The TSS arrangements provide technical assistance at three levels: expertise recruited at the national level; advisers from the CSTs; and specialists from the TSS agency headquarters. If national expertise is not available, the CST advisers and TSS specialists are asked to provide the requested technical assistance. Resort to international expertise outside the CSTs and TSS agency headquarters is made only if none of the three levels are able to supply it.

35. The evaluation report concluded that the intended sequential use of expertise has not always occurred for various reasons: lack of clarity of the role of the CSTs in the programming process; the complexity of UNFPA programming procedures; the lack of national expertise; and the complexity of government procedures. This issue will be addressed in a revised set of TSS guidelines that will govern the next cycle of the TSS arrangements.

36. The CSTs have been engaged in the training of national counterparts through on-the-job training during in-country missions, through workshops as part of project activities, and through attachment training at CST offices. Due to the heavy workload of the CSTs at the initial stage of their establishment, however, contribution to national capacity building has been limited. As the evaluation report itself acknowledged, the reasons for this relate to the way the arrangements have been used rather than their intrinsic merit. UNFPA agrees that CSTs should be more involved in assisting countries to build up their capacity to develop, manage and implement their population programmes. In order to address this weakness, the IATF has reviewed the functions of the CSTs and has agreed to focus on technical assistance at strategic phases of the country programme cycle. This would allow the CSTs to devote more time to their training functions both during in-country missions and through organized and structured training programmes at the national level. In order to assist the CSTs in fulfilling this role more effectively, the IATF has agreed that the Country

Directors and CSTs would accelerate the preparation of the inventories of national expertise on the basis of which appropriate training programmes could be organized. The IATF also concurred with the evaluation's recommendation to provide the CST advisers with more time for other non-mission tasks, e.g., writing papers, preparing articles and carrying out advocacy work, through, *inter alia*, encouraging UNFPA field offices to further mobilize national expertise and to increase the use of electronic means of communication with the CST advisers.

37. An important component of the TSS arrangements that has not functioned to its full capacity is that of the TSS specialists at agency headquarters. There was some understandable difficulty in adjusting to the new role of TSS specialists, which required a fundamental shift in the administrative and technical relationships between headquarters and advisers in the field. In addition, communication problems between the CSTs and the agency headquarters, including UNFPA headquarters, led to a perceived feeling of exclusion among the TSS specialists from the TSS arrangements. The inadequacy of funds allocated for travel has also impeded the work of the TSS specialists.

38. The IATF has reviewed the above issues and has taken steps to improve communications between TSS specialists and the CST advisers. UNFPA has agreed to provide additional travel funds to enable TSS specialists to undertake field missions to facilitate their work. The agreed procedures clarifying the roles of all components of the TSS arrangements and ensuring the sharing of all relevant information and materials will be incorporated in the revised TSS guidelines. The revised guidelines will also emphasize that TSS specialists should be used where necessary at crucial stages of the project/programme cycle in consultation with the CSTs and the UNFPA field offices.

39. Another area that needs strengthening is the ability of CST advisers and TSS specialists to ensure that research is linked to operational activities. In taking a more pro-active role in defining what their technical needs are, CSTs will assist the TSS specialists in focusing their research in areas that are directly linked to the experiences and needs of the countries being served. CSTs would provide a wealth of experiences from different regions that the TSS specialists could tap to integrate and produce information that is tailored to country needs. Visits to CST offices and joint missions with CST advisers would further contribute to the strengthening of this link between state-of-the-art informational and operational activities both at the country and the agency level.

D. Organizational issues

40. Noting the evaluation comments and building on discussions with the IATF members on organizational issues, UNFPA has made the following assessment with regard to the current CST configuration, its composition and its suitability to the needs of various regions and personnel issues.

41. The workload and requirements of the CSTs are expected to change in the coming years. As country programmes mature and as countries work towards the achievement of ICPD goals, a shift in the functions of the CSTs towards focusing on strategic interventions in various stages of the programme cycle is expected to occur. The expertise that this will require will also have to be revisited to meet the new orientation of the national population programmes.

42. The evaluation of the TSS arrangements took into consideration the capacity of UNFPA field offices to meet increased accountability for the management of country programmes given increased decentralized approval authority. The evaluation has made recommendations to strengthen UNFPA field offices as a way of further improving the effectiveness of the TSS arrangements. It has also recommended the establishment of satellite units of CSTs, composed of two or three CST advisers located in selected field offices in each region.

43. Given the short period of existence of the TSS arrangements, UNFPA considers it premature to alter the current structure to accommodate the concept of satellite units. It is contrary to the team concept that has been built up during the last three years and would be detrimental to the integrated, holistic approach to technical assistance that is at the core of UNFPA's programming process. It should be noted that the Fund is taking several steps to strengthen the field offices and to facilitate their work through the use of national staff both for the technical and administrative management of country programme implementation and through the simplification of programming procedures.

44. UNFPA has given due attention to the merits of creating a fourth team in sub-Saharan Africa, as proposed in the evaluation report. The Fund has decided, however, that for now the advantages of retaining the current three teams outweigh those of a four-team configuration. The principal considerations influencing this decision are:

(a) The three teams have already acquired significant experience in the countries they cover that would be diluted with the reassignment of some advisers to a fourth team;

(b) Creating a fourth team would lead to greater homogeneity in the countries served and thus to less opportunity to benefit from a variety of experiences in that each of the three existing teams covers countries that vary significantly in terms of culture and degree of advancement of population programmes, a situation facilitating valuable information exchange between countries;

(c) A fourth team would result in greater linguistic polarization, which is undesirable since the countries grouped under the three main languages (English, French, Portuguese) have much to learn from each other;

(d) Air transportation facilities at the three sites are superior to those at any relevant fourth site;

(e) The heavy expenses associated with the creation of basic infrastructure and with the need to represent most disciplines on a fourth team do not make such an alternative cost-effective at this time;

(f) As national capacities are strengthened over time, countries will increasingly utilize national expertise to backstop population programmes, thus reducing the need for regional advisory services.

Thus, UNFPA is proposing to strengthen the three existing teams by adding a total of three posts and by assuring a greater range of language abilities among advisers being recruited for vacancies.

45. While the evaluation report recommended relocating the team from Santiago to a location in Central America, the Fund wishes to retain the CST for Latin America and the Caribbean in Santiago in order to maintain its access to and interaction with ECLAC (including the Latin American Demographic Centre) and other United Nations agencies and NGO regional offices that collaborate with TSS agency headquarters and CST advisers, such as the UNESCO regional office, the FAO regional office, the ILO multidisciplinary team, the UNICEF office covering various countries, and the Latin American Faculty in Social Sciences (FLACSO). Studies considering the cost-effectiveness of relocating the CST to other locations in the region did not show any comparative advantages. However, in order to meet the special needs of the Caribbean subregion, the Fund has already deployed two adviser posts to the subregion. These two posts maintain full operational ties with the CST office in Santiago.

46. UNFPA has examined carefully the proposal in the evaluation report to merge the CST office for the South Pacific with that of the UNFPA office in Suva. However, the Fund does not consider this appropriate since the major functions of the two offices, though complementary, are totally different: technical assistance for the former and country programme/project management for the latter. The UNFPA office in Suva has the responsibility to assist the various Governments in the subregion in developing their respective projects and in promoting population issues. While the UNFPA office also has monitoring, administrative and financial responsibilities for projects, the CST office for the South Pacific provides technical inputs to the projects based on the advisers' experiences from different population disciplines and the team's interaction with other CSTs and with TSS agency headquarters. Another major task of the CST office is to ensure close interaction of research and analytical work with institutional activities and to convey the findings to the UNFPA office and to Governments.

IV. PROPOSALS FOR STRENGTHENING THE TSS ARRANGEMENTS

47. The agencies participating in the TSS arrangements have undertaken various internal changes to make population issues more visible within these agencies and to further integrate these issues into their respective mandates. Based on the internal restructuring within each agency, and their role in providing the CSTs with state-of-the-art information, UNFPA proposes to retain the number of posts at the headquarters of TSS agencies and to create one new post at ESCWA. Given the contribution of the CSTs at the country level, in particular the contribution to a more strategic approach to population and development in the respective regions, UNFPA proposes to increase the number of CST advisers by six, from 122 to 128. Thus, the total number of TSS posts are proposed to increase by seven, from 164 to 171: 128 on the Country Support Teams and 43 specialists at agency headquarters and in regional offices. This section presents the needs in each region and the Fund's major proposals to strengthen the TSS arrangements considering the recommendations of the evaluation report and UNFPA's new programming priorities and strategic focus in the light of the ICPD Programme of Action.

1. Distribution of CST posts

48. For the CSTs the proposed structure continues to focus, in terms of the number of experts, on Africa. The CSTs in Africa, which are already heavily overloaded with work, will have even greater responsibility in assisting countries that are relatively farther away from achieving the ICPD goals and where technical knowledge is less readily available. As regards programme areas, there would be proportionately more CST advisers in reproductive health than in population and development strategies or any of the other substantive areas. As the IEC advisers mainly provide technical assistance in support of reproductive health, most of them have been placed in that sector. However, it should be noted that these IEC advisers also provide assistance in the area of population and development strategies. In addition, each team has advisers dealing with advocacy-related IEC activities.

49. The empowerment of women and the promotion of the girl child as well as advocacy work will be mainstreamed in all programmes supported by the Fund. Activities in population statistics, information systems and databases will be undertaken primarily in support of the Fund's work in the core areas with a major focus on population and development strategies. The TSS specialists would be expected to provide technical backstopping to the CSTs in the various areas of the Fund using the experience and wealth of accumulated information of each agency.

50. Africa. The largest number of UNFPA-supported country projects are in Africa. The CST advisers located in Dakar, Addis Ababa and Harare provide technical assistance to 45 countries. In 1991-1994, average annual expenditures for country projects in these countries were approximately $40.2 million.. In the next programme cycle, 1996-1999, the average annual allocations are expected to reach $72.0 million. As stated in the evaluation report, the CSTs in

Africa have an extremely heavy workload, with advisers averaging 90 mission days per year. Advisers working in this region also must cope with difficult transportation and inadequate infrastructure conditions. In an effort to strengthen the CSTs in Africa, UNFPA proposes to increase the number of advisers from 53 to 56. This increase of 3 posts is intended to address current deficiencies in the areas of adolescent reproductive health; integration of population concerns into the curricula of formal education; and gender, population and development. The Fund also proposes to redistribute and redefine some of the current posts to reflect the importance of reproductive health. Of the 56 posts, 31 would be in the area of reproductive health; 3 in gender, population and development; 16 in population and development strategies including experts in population statistics, data analysis, information systems and databases; 3 with a major focus on advocacy; and 3 CST directors. (See table 2.)

51. In the area of reproductive health, each of the CSTs in Africa would have advisers in the sectors of: organization and management; training; IEC for health workers; and reproductive health for adolescents. In the CSTs in Dakar and Addis Ababa there would also be expertise in various fields in support of reproductive health, such as sociocultural research and population education. The CST in Harare would provide expertise in operations research and population education in support of reproductive health. Each team would be able to provide technical services in gender, population and development; population and development strategies; and advocacy. The teams would also provide technical assistance in data processing and database management mainly in support of reproductive health. The teams in Dakar and Addis Ababa would consist of English- and French-speaking advisers while the team in Harare would have English- and Portuguese-speaking advisers.

52. Arab States and Europe. According to the evaluation report, the CST based in Amman has, in general, met the demands for technical services in the Arab States and Europe region. However, future demands are expected to grow significantly as population programmes in the Arab region advance, as well as because of the increasing demands for advisory and technical services from the European countries with economies in transition. The CST in Amman began servicing these countries in January 1995. The annual average expenditures for country activities in the region during the period 1991-1994 were $12.4 million. The estimated annual average allocations for the next programme cycle, 1996-1999, are $26.0 million.

53. The ICPD Programme of Action points up the strong relationship between gender concerns and reproductive health and stresses the importance of empowering women as a major component of population policies and programmes. In this regard, there has been a growth in the number of requests from the Arab states for technical support and for the services of experts on gender, population and development. UNFPA proposes to respond to these needs by adding one post in Amman for an adviser on gender, population and development. The total number of posts in the CST in Amman would be 18. Of these posts, 10 would be in reproductive health and related support services; 2 in gender, population and development; 4 in population and development strategies, including posts in population statistics, data analysis, information systems and

databases; 1 in advocacy activities; and 1 CST director. In order to better meet the demand for reproductive health and related support services in the countries with economies in transition, the functions of the TSS specialist (formerly known as coordinator) at WHO/EURO in Copenhagen have been redefined to be similar to those of the CST advisers on reproductive health.

54. In the area of reproductive health, the CST in Amman would provide expertise in organization and management; training and curriculum development; logistics; and sociocultural and operations research. There would also be experts in the field of population education to support reproductive health. The team would also assist countries in such fields as data collection and sampling; integrated population information systems; and the analysis, utilization and dissemination of population data. Expertise would also be provided in the areas of gender, population and development; and advocacy.

55. Asia and the Pacific. The region is currently served by three CSTs located in Bangkok, Kathmandu and Suva, with 38 adviser posts serving the diverse needs for expertise in the region, including those in central and western Asia. The average annual expenditures in the region during 1991-1994 for country activities were $52.0 million. The estimated annual average allocations for the next programme cycle, 1996-1999, are $81.0 million. In recognition of the relatively greater national capacity that is available in the region, UNFPA proposes to reduce the total number of advisory posts by one and to redistribute some of them to place greater emphasis on reproductive health. Other national technical requirements that cannot be served by the first two tiers of the TSS arrangements would be met by international expertise financed through country programme allocations, as is the current practice. Out of the 37 proposed advisory posts, 21 would be in reproductive health and related support services; 3 would be in the area of gender, population and development; 7 would be in population and development strategies, including posts in population statistics, data analysis, information systems and databases; 3 would be in advocacy; and there would continue to be 3 CST directors.

56. The CSTs in Asia would provide assistance in reproductive health services; reproductive health training and research; logistics; sociocultural research; programme design and management; information and counseling as well as in areas in support of reproductive health such as population education. The CSTs would have expertise in gender, population and development as well as in population and development strategies and in advocacy. There would also be technical assistance in the area of population statistics.

57. Latin America and the Caribbean. The demands on the CST advisers, including the CST director, in the region have been such that only part of the requests for their services can be accommodated. Reproductive health is the major area of work, and most population IEC and population and development activities are in support of reproductive health programmes and projects. The 1995 CST work plans show that the highest demand for technical services is in the gender, population and development area, with almost all of the requests being linked to reproductive health projects. There is also an increased demand for technical assistance in the area

of population and the environment, which is an area of expertise not available in the CST. Finally, it should be noted that in view of the strong opposition to reproductive health action programmes in many countries in the region, extra population advocacy efforts will be needed to create awareness of the importance of the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action. The average annual expenditures for 1991-1994 for country activities in the region were $16.6 million. In the next programme cycle, 1996-1999, the estimated annual average allocations are $25.0 million. The evaluation report concluded that one additional adviser was needed in the area of population and the environment, that gender issues should be further strengthened in all projects, and that the expertise in communications should be improved. To address these recommendations and to meet the high demand for technical assistance as well as the communication/advocacy needs in the region, UNFPA proposes to increase the number of advisory posts from 14 to 17 in the following areas: population and development strategies (including environmental concerns); gender, population and development; and advocacy. The distribution of advisory posts would be: 9 experts in reproductive health and related support services; 2 experts in gender, population and development; 3 experts in population and development strategies including experts in population statistics, analysis, information systems and databases; 2 experts in the area of advocacy; and 1 CST director.

58. The proposed nine posts in the area of reproductive health would focus on services, training, sociocultural research, service delivery through non-traditional channels, and programme management. The team would provide expertise in population IEC programme development, population education and IEC strategies for the formal and informal sector in support of reproductive health. The CST in Santiago would assist in population advocacy. Expertise would also be provided in the areas of gender, population and development; population policies; and in demographic analysis.

2. Distribution of TSS posts

59. Agency headquarters and regional offices. The current restructuring in the partner agencies incorporating the ICPD Programme of Action in their respective work programmes shows their commitment to working closely with UNFPA in the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action. Based on this, UNFPA proposes to continue working with these agencies at headquarters and in regional offices but to revise the posts and job descriptions in order to further strengthen the advocacy role of the TSS specialists in incorporating the new population and development paradigm developed at the ICPD into the work of each respective agency and to better address the needs of the CSTs for technical backstopping.

60. Instead of redeploying the nine coordinator posts to the CSTs as recommended in the evaluation report, UNFPA proposes to change these into specialist posts, to be reviewed after two years, with the addition of one specialist in population and development strategies at ESCWA. This arrangement would be subject to very strict monitoring. UNFPA would report to the

Executive Board on the results of this arrangement and would propose appropriate measures based on the assessment of its success. By maintaining a number of TSS posts at the various regional offices of the United Nations and WHO, UNFPA wishes to promote population issues in the respective regions and to further develop them as entry points for population knowledge and data in the respective organizations. The job descriptions for the posts involved would also focus on integrating population considerations into each respective organization's work plan and in mobilizing relevant knowledge, experience and expertise in support of population programmes.

61. In the area of reproductive health, UNFPA proposes to continue funding four specialists at WHO headquarters. The terms of reference of the current posts have been revised to respond better to the needs for technical backstopping of the CSTs and the agency's work. They would specialize in such areas as planning and management of programmes; training; adolescent reproductive health; and IEC. As noted above, UNFPA proposes to continue funding six specialists at WHO regional offices (formerly regional coordinator posts). Four specialist posts at UNESCO and two posts at the ILO would be in the area of IEC, mainly in support of reproductive health activities.

62. In the area of population and development strategies, UNFPA proposes to fund 22 specialists. Three specialist posts at FAO have been redefined to cover the areas of population and rural development, environment and natural resources, and sociocultural research. The 3 specialists at the ILO would focus their work on population and development strategies, population distribution, and labour markets. One post at UNESCO has been redefined to focus on sociocultural research in the context of development strategies in order to better reflect the ICPD Programme of Action. The 2 posts at United Nations headquarters have also been redefined to reflect the assumed needs in the area of population and development strategies. This sector includes activities in the area of population statistics, data analysis, information systems and databases. UNFPA proposes to fund 9 specialists at the United Nations headquarters. Almost all posts have been redefined to reflect the ICPD Programme of Action and the anticipated needs at CSTs and in the countries being assisted. As the 3 specialist posts (formerly known as coordinators) in population and development strategies at the United Nations headquarters and at ECA and ECLAC have been redefined as specialists they, along with the additional post at ESCWA, have been included in the sector of population and development strategies and not listed under "other" as in the current distribution of TSS experts (see tables 1 and 2).

63. In addition, UNFPA would fund three gender, population and development specialists, one each at FAO, the ILO and WHO. The two advocacy posts at FAO would focus mainly on IEC.

64. In conclusion, the role of TSS specialists would be further refined and strengthened in order to provide adequate technical backstopping to all CSTs, not just to their agency counterparts in the teams. Furthermore, their technical functions within their respective agencies would be

further enhanced to take into consideration the importance of linking research to operational activities within the framework of the ICPD Programme of Action.

3. Organizational/administrative arrangements

65. The evaluators found that the communication among the parties to the TSS arrangements could be improved and that recruitment and reporting procedures should be simplified. The evaluation made a number of recommendations that would not only contribute to better implementation of the arrangements but would also improve its transparency. Given the stated commitments by the participating agencies to implement the TSS arrangements fully and in view of the fact that most of them have completed internal structural changes, UNFPA is confident that the collegial spirit among the participants of the TSS arrangements will be reinforced. As the functions of each tier of the arrangements appear more clear to all parties and the interaction increases through, for example, improved communication, the arrangements will fully achieve their objectives.

66. As a response to these evaluation findings, the IATF has encouraged UNFPA field offices to develop high-quality backstopping plans to be submitted to the respective CSTs, and it also has concluded that both CSTs and TSS agency headquarters should continue sharing work plans and progress reports. The recruitment process, the assessment of country missions, and the reporting procedures have been simplified, and these will be reflected in the revised TSS guidelines. To this end, the IATF also suggested that the guidelines be updated on a continuous basis so that agreed-upon revisions can be implemented immediately. The IATF recommended that the CST directors should visit each TSS agency headquarters at least once a year.

67. As one means of improving the interaction between the TSS agency headquarters and CSTs, some TSS agency headquarters have conducted technical workshops inviting the CST advisers concerned. In addition, UNFPA would develop databases to improve the access of information to all TSS parties. Based on the IATF's recommendation to establish structural modalities to share information, UNFPA will make proposals later this year to the IATF on how this can be implemented.

V. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF PROPOSED ARRANGEMENTS

68. Given the proposed increase in the number of CST advisers/TSS specialists, UNFPA estimates the budget for the TSS arrangements (excluding AOS) to be $107 million for the period 1996-1999. Given the actual and estimated expenditures for the last four-year period, 1992-1995, the amount for that period is expected to be $74.4 million. It should be noted that the rate of vacancy in the initial years of the arrangements was high.

69. Over the period 1996-1999, it is estimated that the allocations related to TSS personnel will amount to $93 million. The costs for travel and missions are assumed to be $8 million, and the costs for activities related to training and for seminars and meetings to be $1 million. Administrative costs, including office rentals, equipment and printing, are expected to be $5 million.

70. The distribution of allocations by region would be as follows: the three CSTs in Africa would receive 30 per cent of the allocations; the Arab States and Europe, 10 per cent; the three CSTs in Asia and the Pacific region, 22 per cent; Latin America and the Caribbean region, 10 per cent; and the TSS agency headquarters would receive 28 per cent.

71. In its work plan for 1996-1999 and request for programme expenditure authority (document DP/1995/26), UNFPA proposed $44 million to be allocated for the administrative and operational services during the work plan period (4 per cent of programmable resources). Thus, the total allocations for the TSS arrangements and AOS would amount to $151 million for the four-year period 1996-1999.

VI. CONCLUSION

72. UNFPA, in close collaboration with the agencies, has reviewed the TSS arrangements that have been in place since 1992 and, in general, has found these arrangements to be an effective, coordinated and timely approach to the provision of technical backstopping at the request of developing countries. The TSS arrangements, through the experience gained over the past four years and through the proposed adjustments and changes in the TSS posts, are a significant resource to assist developing countries to meet the challenges emanating from the ICPD Programme of Action, in particular to strengthen national capacities in UNFPA's new core programme areas in reproductive health, including family planning and sexual health; population and development strategies; and advocacy.

73. The achievements of the TSS arrangements also appear to go beyond the improvement of availability of technical assistance at the country level. There have also been significant changes in terms of UNFPA's institutional, programming and operational roles, to which the TSS arrangements have contributed. In developing a more strategic and multi-disciplinary approach to population issues, the TSS arrangements have contributed to the appreciation of UNFPA's role from being mainly associated as a funding agency to that of promoting coordination of technical assistance in population through the presence of experts and advisers in the discussion of policy, strategy and programme issues at the country level. The TSS arrangements, by strongly stressing inter-agency collaboration and by encouraging a more systematic incorporation of population elements into the mandate of various United Nations agencies, have brought to bear the strengths and specializations of the various agencies of the United Nations system in support of a coordinated programme approach to population and development activities in developing

countries. The TSS arrangements have also contributed positively to the implementation of General Assembly resolution 47/199 and the resident coordinator system by, *inter alia*, providing a practical modality for promotion of coordinated technical assistance.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

74. The Executive Board may wish to:

(a) Take note of the report as contained in document DP/1995/40;

(b) Welcome the proposals contained in paragraphs 47-67 of this report;

(c) Authorize the Executive Director to commit an amount of $107 million over the four-year period 1996-1999 to implement the TSS arrangements;

(d) Request the Executive Director to submit a report to the Executive Board in 1998 on the progress made in implementing the TSS arrangements with regard to the proposed change of coordinator posts to specialists posts at the United Nations and its regional commissions and at WHO regional offices, as contained in paragraph 60 of this report.

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TABLE 1

Current TSS experts, by sector

SECTOR	COUNTRY SUPPORT TEAMS					AGENCY HEADQUARTERS						REGIONAL OFFICES			TOTAL
	Africa	Arab States and Europe	Asia and the Pacific	Latin America and the Caribbean	Sub-Total	FAO	ILO	UNESCO	UN	WHO	Sub-Total	UN Regional Commission	WHO	Sub-Total	
Reproductive Health	12	7	10	5	34					5	5		6	6	45
Gender, Population and Development	2	1	3	1	7	1	1				2				9
Population and Development Strategies	9	1	5	1	16	2	4	1	2		9				25
Population Statistics, Analysis, Information Systems and Databases	12	3	3	1	19				9		9				28
Information, Education and Communication	15	4	13	4	36	2	1	4			7				43
Other			1[a]	1[b]	2	1[c]			1[d]		2	2[e]		2	6
Directors	3	1	3	1	8										8
TOTAL	53	17	38	14	122	6	6	5	12	5	34	2	6	8	164

[a] Adviser in Management of Population Programmes

[b] Adviser in Management

[c] Population Specialist (Fisheries and Forestry)

[d] Coordinator Post for Population Activities

[e] Coordinator Posts

TABLE 2

Proposed TSS experts, by sector

SECTOR	COUNTRY SUPPORT TEAMS					AGENCY HEADQUARTERS						REGIONAL OFFICES			TOTAL
	Africa	Arab States and Europe	Asia and the Pacific	Latin America and the Caribbean	Sub-Total	FAO	ILO	UNESCO	UN	WHO	Sub-Total	UN Regional Commission	WHO	Sub-Total	
Reproductive Health[1]	31	10	21	9	71		2	4		4	10		6	6	87
Gender, Population and Development	3	2	3	2	10	1	1			1	3				13
Population and Development Strategies[2]	16	4	7	3	30	3	3	1	12		19	3		3	52
Advocacy	3	1	3	2	9	2					2				11
Directors	3	1	3	1	8										8
TOTAL	56	18	37	17	128	6	6	5	12	5	34	3	6	9	171

[1] Includes TSS posts in information, education, and communication mainly focused on reproductive health

[2] Includes TSS posts in population statistics, analysis, information systems and databases